



**MANBAT**



*IS HE MAN...OR  
MAN-MONSTER?*

25¢  
NO. 1  
JAN.  
30582



# MANBAT

**1<sup>st</sup>**  
**DC**  
**ISSUE**



# BAT MAN

AND

# THE CAPTIVE COMMISSIONER

COMMISSIONER GORDON HAS BEEN CAPTURED BY THE 3 SVENGALI BROTHERS, UNDERWORLD FIGURES. WITHOUT ITS COMMISSIONER, GOTHAM CITY IS IN TOTAL CHAOS.

ROBIN, UNTIL COMMISSIONER GORDON IS FREED, THIS CITY IS IN TROUBLE.

NOT JUST TROUBLE, BATMAN, REAL, DEEP, BIG TROUBLE!

YOU TWO GUYS GOTTA MAKE A DEAL WITH THE BATMAN, EITHER WE RUN THIS TOWN, OR NOBODY'LL EVER SEE THE COMMISSIONER AGAIN.

WE'LL "PERSUADE" THE BATMAN...

...TO "TALK THINGS OVER."

DON'T TRY NUTHIN, BATMAN! THIS CAR IS COMPUTERIZED TO TAKE YOU TO OUR HIDEOUT, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO!

IN THAT CASE, LET'S ENJOY SOME SNACKS!

HEY! THIS IS TERRIFIC! HOSTESS FRUIT PIES! I'LL TAKE CHERRY!

APPLE FOR ME!

BATMAN, YOU'RE O.K. THIS HAS REAL FRUIT FILLING.

AND A TENDER CRUST YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE!

THEM DUMB BROTHERS OF MINE LET ME DOWN, LEMME OUTA HERE...

LET'S SAY I HAD A LITTLE BIT OF HELP FROM HOSTESS!

BATMAN, YOU'VE DONE IT AGAIN!

GLAD YOU ENJOYED HOSTESS FRUIT PIES!

AND AS EVERYONE KNOWS...

... A LITTLE NAP AFTER A MEAL HELPS!

YOU GET A BIG DELIGHT IN EVERY BITE OF HOSTESS® FRUIT PIES



**BEGINNING: A  
BOLD NEW SERIES  
FEATURING FANTASY'S  
MOST BIZARRE HERO...**

# THE MACABRE MANBAT

## BEWARE the EYES of **BARON TYME**

HEED ME,  
FRANCINE  
LANGSTROM:  
HEED THE VOICE  
OF YOUR  
MASTER!

YOU WILL  
SHED YOUR  
MORTAL FORM,  
AND FLY ONCE  
MORE AS THE  
QUEEN OF THE  
NIGHT--  
**SHE-BAT!**

YOU WILL FLY--  
AND YOU WILL  
SLAY--

--FOR SUCH  
IS THE COMMAND  
OF **BARON TYME!**

GUEST-STARRING

**BATMAN**

**A TALE OF TERROR  
IN GOTHAM CITY...**

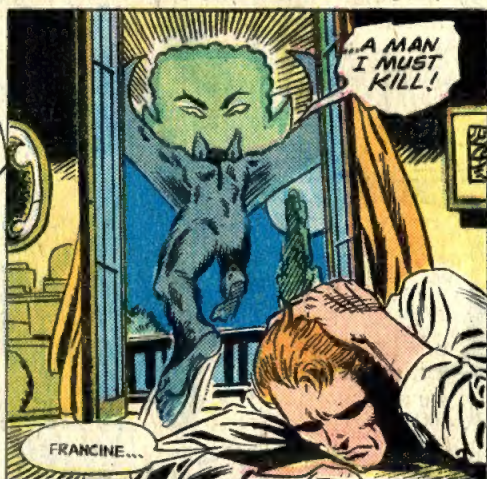
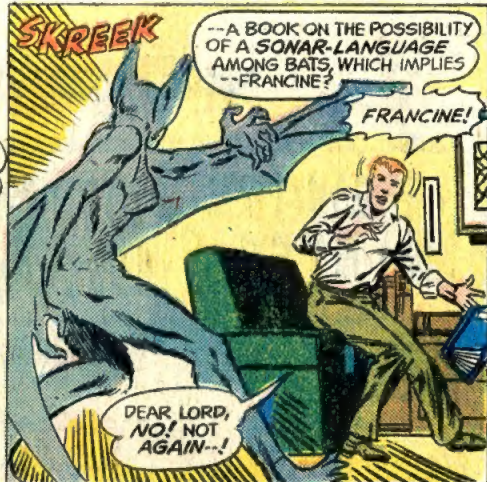
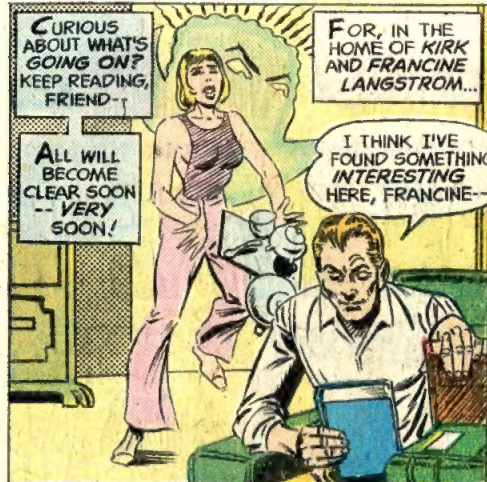
Presented by: **GERRY CONWAY** (Writer/Editor) • **STEVE DITKO** (Penciller) • **AL MILGROM** (Inker)

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CONFUSED? DEAR READER,  
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE...

FRANCINE PACKS  
QUITE A WALLOP  
WHEN SHE'S... CHANGED.  
I HOPE I CAN FIND  
HER... STOP HER...  
BEFORE IT'S  
TOO LATE!

FIRST--  
HAVE TO  
TAKE MY  
BAT  
GLAND  
SERUM--

--THE SAME  
SERUM I ONCE  
FORCED FRANCINE  
TO TAKE, WHICH  
IS THE CAUSE  
OF ALL OUR  
PROBLEMS!

SHE'S NEVER BEEN  
THE SAME SINCE  
THAT VAMPIRE BAT  
BIT HER IN LAS VEGAS  
--IT POISONED HER,  
TURNING HER INTO A  
VAMPIRE WHENEVER  
SHE-- HUH?

--SOME SORT OF  
FLYING  
MONSTER--?

NO! IT'S JUST  
AN ILLUSION--  
DESIGNED TO DELAY  
ME!

IT'S GOT TO BE THE  
DOING OF THAT CREEP--  
THAT BARON TYME!

HAHAHAHAHA

SKREEK!  
AND SPEAKING  
OF TYME...  
SKREEK!

THERE HE  
IS... ON THAT  
BUILDING  
LEDGE!  
SKREEK!

YOU MUST GET A  
SICK KIND OF KICK  
WATCHING MY WIFE  
KILL PEOPLE, MISTER!  
SKREEK! BUT THAT'S  
GOING TO STOP--

HAHA HA

--RIGHT  
NOW!

SKREEE-EKK!  
ANOTHER ILLUSION!  
HE TRICKED ME--  
TRICKED ME!





FOR THE PAST WEEK, TYME'S BEEN USING FRANCINE-- AND I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO STOP HIM YET!

IF ONLY I COULD-- WAIT!

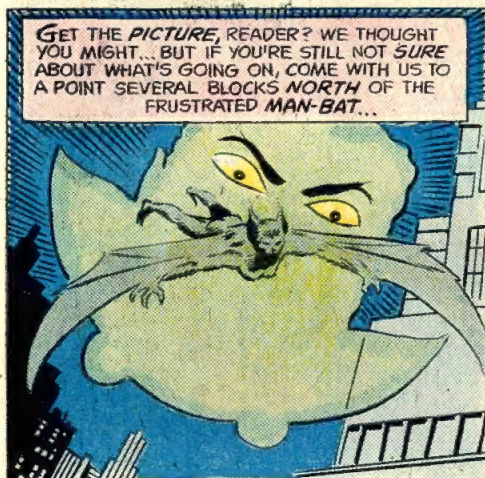
IT'S HER!



DARLING, DON'T--

SKREEEEEEK!

THAT'S IT! TYME'S WON! THERE'S NO WAY I CAN FIND FRANCINE BEFORE HE FORCES HER TO KILL! NO WAY!



GET THE PICTURE, READER? WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT... BUT IF YOU'RE STILL NOT SURE ABOUT WHAT'S GOING ON, COME WITH US TO A POINT SEVERAL BLOCKS NORTH OF THE FRUSTRATED MAN-BAT...



... WHERE A HYPNOTICALLY-CONTROLLED SHE-BAT IS ABOUT TO COMMIT THE ULTIMATE CRIME...

... UNDER THE SPELL OF THE MYSTERIOUS BARON TYME.



YOU SEE THE MAN BEFORE YOU, FRANCINE!

ATTACK HIM, FRANCINE...



ATTACK AND KILL!

SKREEEK

EH...? WHAT ... IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN...?



**A**LL THE ACTION STARTS WITH A PULL OF THE T-STICK (NO BATTERIES)

WATCH DAREDEVIL DAN CATCH THE THRILL BAR AND SPIN!

SEE THE MUSTANG II DO A WILD POWER SPIN-OUT!

SET STUNT WHEEL...PULL T-STICK

**SCREEEEEE**



# Tournament of Thrills

**1** BIG SET GIVES YOU ALL THESE DEATH DEFYING WILD-ACTION STUNTS!

FEATURING DAREDEVIL DAN

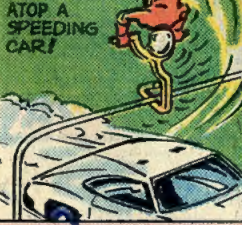
**A**LL THE ACTION OF THE REAL AUTO DAREDEVILS!

DAREDEVIL DAN CATCHES THE THRILL BAR FROM ATOP A SPEEDING CAR!

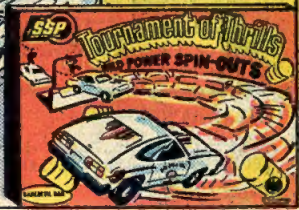
THE MUSTANG II CRASHES INTO THE WALL AS DAREDEVIL DAN LEAPS FOR LIFE!

"DRAGGING" WITH ALL THE FUN AND EXCITEMENT OF THE REAL PROS!

**SET INCLUDES:**  
MUSTANG II MODEL  
DAREDEVIL DAN  
HOOK  
THRILL BAR  
JUMP RAMP  
BARRELS  
T-STICK



**Kenner**



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**NO!**

**SKREEEK**

**SKREEEK**

DESPERATELY, MAN-BAT GRAPPLES WITH THE FEMALE IN HIS ARMS--AND FEELS HER TURN, TWISTING--STRUGGLING TO BE FREE--!

SKREEK! IN HEAVEN'S NAME, FRANCINE-- YOU CAN'T--!

FRANCINE LANGSTROM DOESN'T SEEM TO HEAR HER HUSBAND'S WORDS. HER FACE IS A BESTIAL MASK OF HATRED--

--AND HER EYES ARE STARKLY MAD!

SHE DOESN'T KNOW ME! DEAR LORD, WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO HER?

BARON TYME IS GOING TO SUFFER FOR THIS--

**SKREEEK**

--HE'S GOING TO SUFFER!

**WHOMP!**

A MOMENT LATER, THERE'S A KIND OF SILENCE-- DEADLY SILENCE, BROKEN BY THE IMPACT OF A FRAIL BODY AGAINST A SIDEWALK, AND THE QUICK FLUTTER OF LEATHERY WINGS--!

SKREEK! DARLING--!

SHE'S JUST UNCONSCIOUS... BUT SHE COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED.

IT'S TIME I LEARNED ALL I CAN... ABOUT TYME!

SKREEK! DON'T MOVE, MY FRIEND, I WANT TO SPEAK WITH YOU...

TH- THIS IS INSANE...  
INSANE!





I AGREE WITH YOU--  
**SKREEEK!** IT IS INSANE.  
YOU'D BE WISE TO FORGET  
IT EVER HAPPENED--

--AFTER YOU  
ANSWER A FEW  
QUESTIONS!

F-FIRST--YOU HAVE  
TO TELL ME! A-ARE  
YOU WEARING A MASK?



NO.



DEAR LORD...  
DEAR LORD...  
I FEEL ILL...

ONE: HAVE  
YOU EVER HAD  
ANY--**SKREEEK!**  
--DEALINGS WITH  
A MAN NAMED  
**BARON TYME?**

TWO: IF SO...  
WHY WOULD  
TYME WANT TO  
KILL YOU, MISTER--?

YOUR NAME--?



MY NAME? IT'S  
**ARTHUR**--  
PROFESSOR  
RAYMOND  
ARTHUR.

A-AND YES...  
I DO KNOW A  
MAN NAMED  
TYME... BUT NOT  
"**BARON**" TYME.  
HE'S A COLLEAGUE  
OF MINE AT  
**ANTIOKE**  
UNIVERSITY...

**CLEMENT TYME**  
... PROFESSOR OF  
**MEDIEVAL**  
**HISTORY.**



AS FOR CLEMENT  
TRYING TO KILL ME  
--IT-IT'S **ABSDURD.**

I HAVEN'T  
A CLOSER  
FRIEND  
ON THE  
**FACULTY!**

THEN YOU  
HAVEN'T ANY  
FRIENDS, PROFESSOR.  
**SKREEEK!**



FOR THE PAST WEEK THAT...  
AH... **WOMAN** HAS BEEN  
HUNTING AND KILLING MEN  
LIKE YOURSELF--

--ON THE ORDERS  
OF A MAN--  
**SKREEEK!--**  
WHO CALLS  
HIMSELF  
**BARON**  
**TYME!**

IT  
CAN'T BE  
**CLEMENT!**



BELIEVE ME, HE HAS  
NO **REASON** TO WANT  
ME DEAD--UNLESS--

NO. IT ISN'T  
**POSSIBLE.**

WHAT  
ISN'T  
POSSIBLE?  
**SKREEEK!**



CLEMENT HAS A  
RATHER **ODD** LITTLE  
HOBBY, YOU SEE.  
HE--

**SKRE- EEEK!**





IT HAPPENS QUICKLY.  
A LUNGE OUT OF THE  
DARKNESS--

--VAMPIRE FANGS  
SINKING INTO  
FLESH--

--A STARTLED GASP--

WHAT--?

SKREE

EEK!



OH, NO! NO!  
FRANCINE--  
SKREEEK!  
--WHY--?



THUMP!

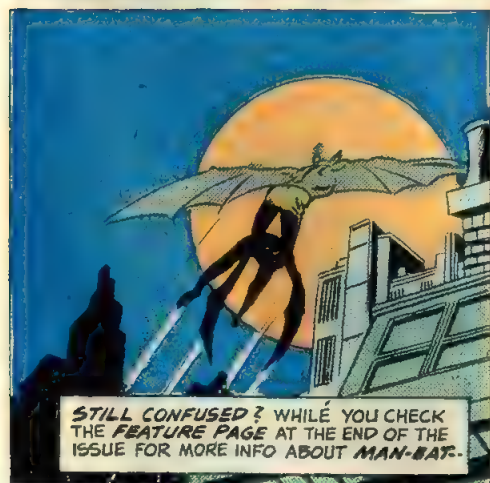


SKREEEK!  
BARON...  
TYME...

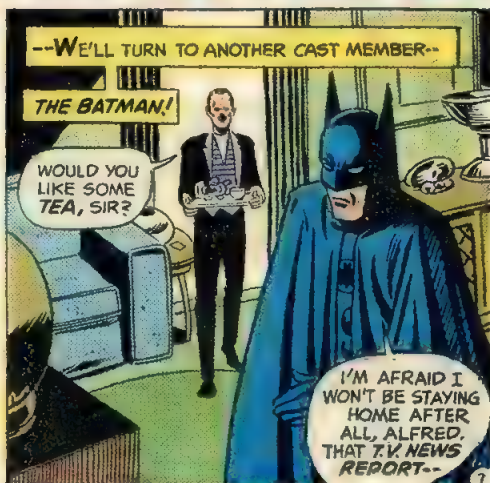


SKREEEK

SKREEEK



STILL CONFUSED? WHILE YOU CHECK  
THE FEATURE PAGE AT THE END OF THE  
ISSUE FOR MORE INFO ABOUT MAN-BAT.



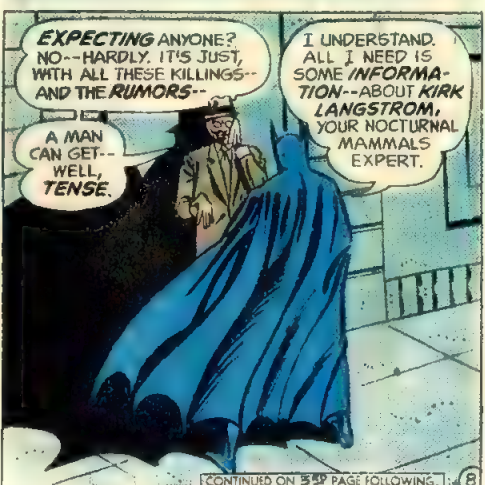
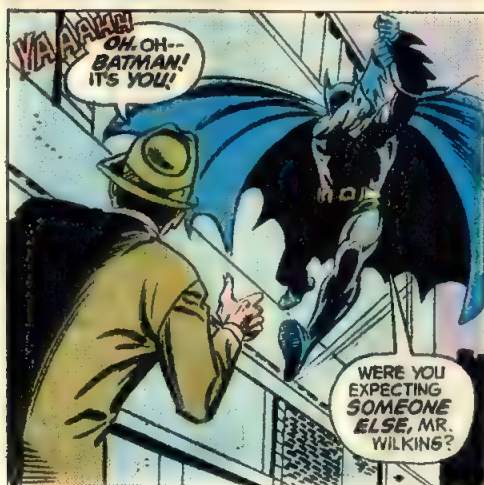
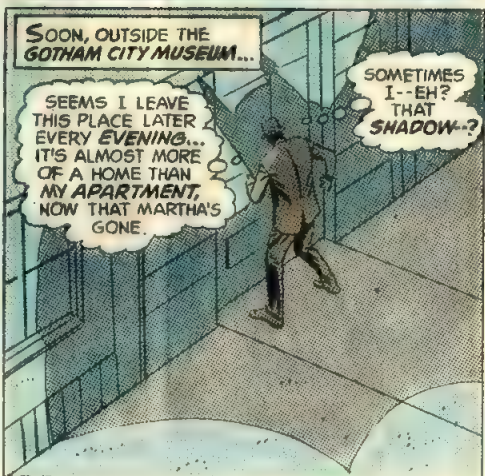
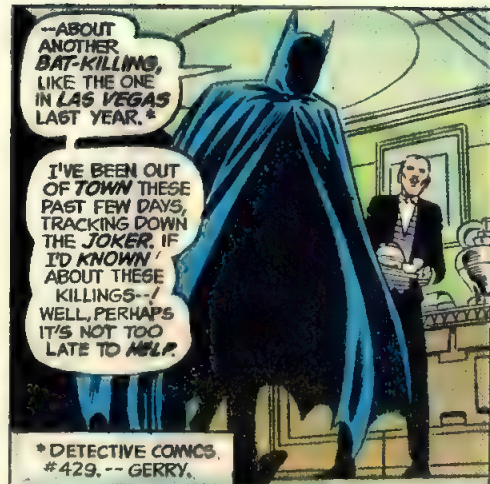
--WE'LL TURN TO ANOTHER CAST MEMBER--

THE BATMAN!

WOULD YOU  
LIKE SOME  
TEA, SIR?

I'M AFRAID I  
WON'T BE STAYING  
HOME AFTER  
ALL, ALFRED.  
THAT T.V. NEWS  
REPORT--







# The secret of teaching yourself music

Why keep depriving yourself of the thrill of making your own music?

Here's a pleasant way to learn at home in spare time. You play simple familiar tunes right from the start, then more advanced compositions.

Choose piano, guitar or spinet organ.

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But surprising as it seems, you need no such thing. Thousands of people just like you have taught themselves to play by using the lessons we give by mail. And you can too.

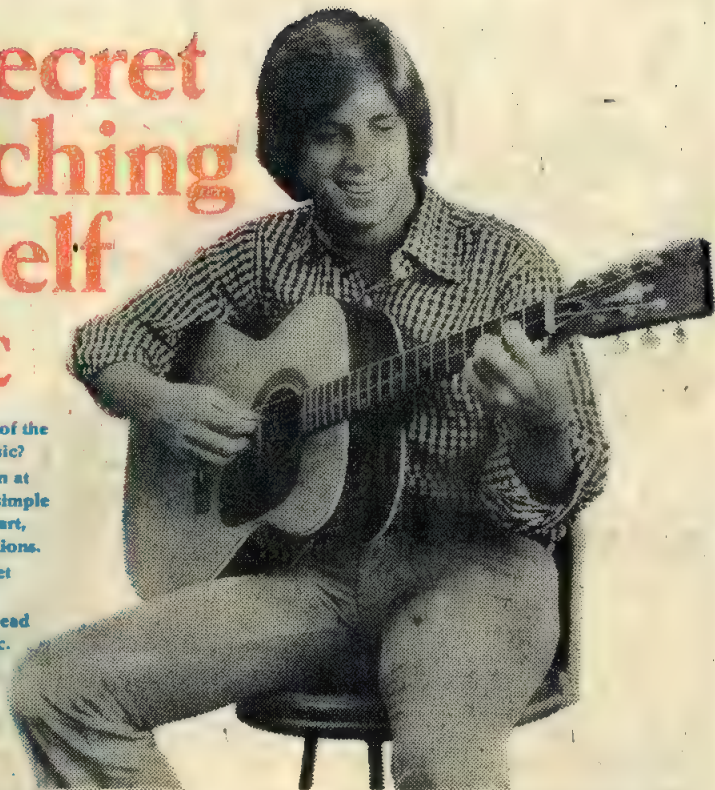
With our lessons, you learn to play the right way — by note from regular sheet music. Without any gadgetry or gimmickry. And all it costs you is just pennies a day.

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- ☐ Guitar (pick style) ☐ Piano  
☐ Spinet Organ (2 keyboards)

Mr.  
Mrs.  
Miss

PRINT NAME

Age  
City and state

Address

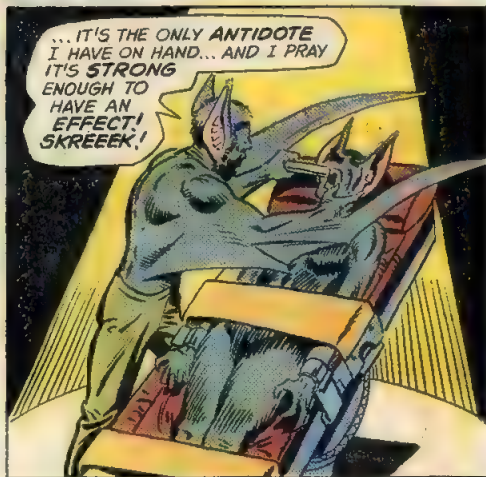
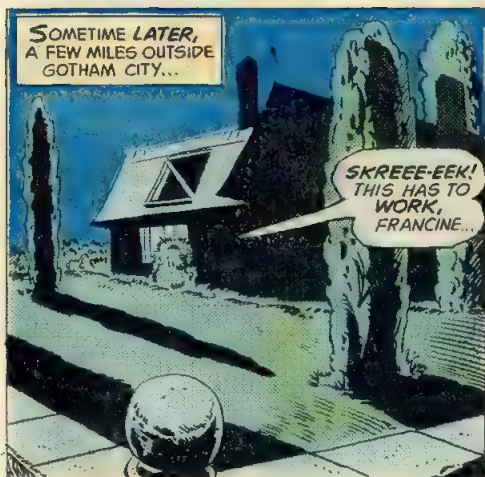
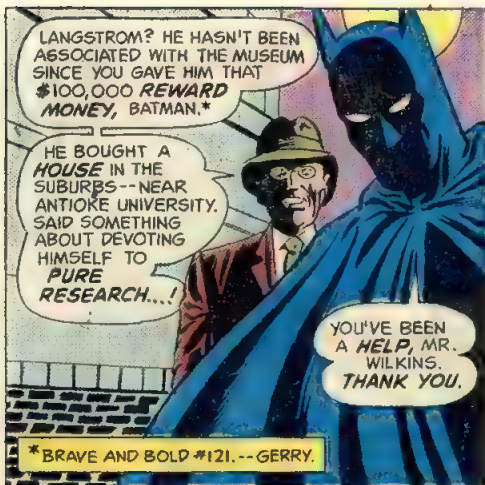
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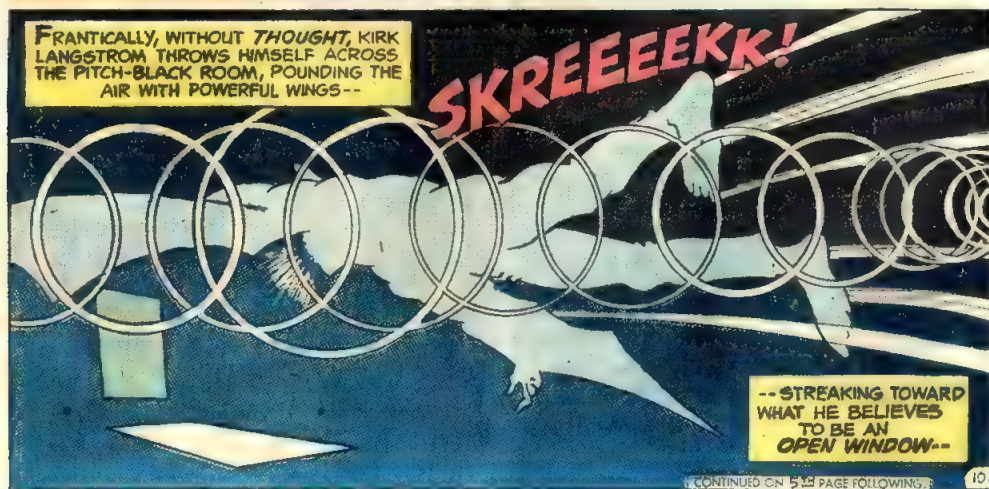
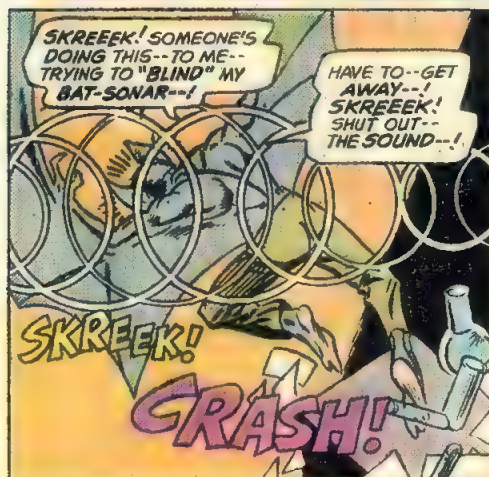
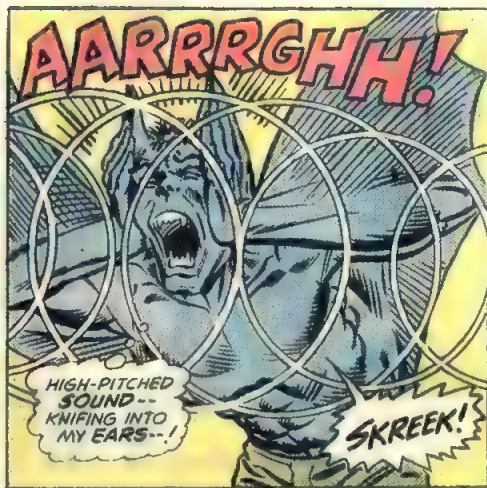














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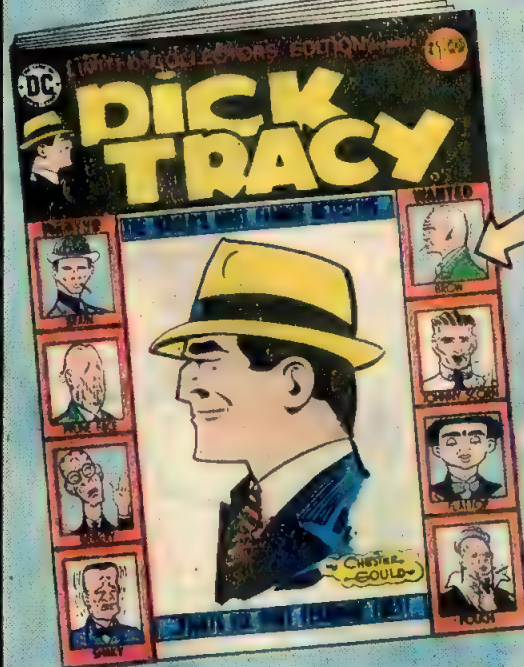
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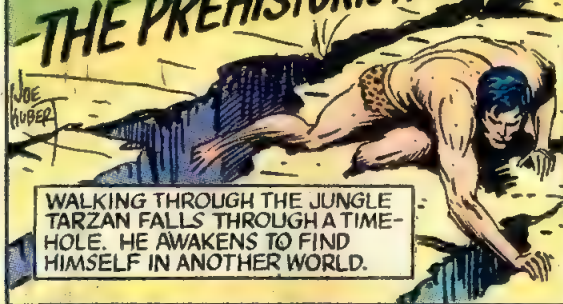
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EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

# Tarzan

DISCOVERS THE LAND OF THE PREHISTORIC ANIMALS



WALKING THROUGH THE JUNGLE TARZAN FALLS THROUGH A TIME-HOLE. HE AWAKENS TO FIND HIMSELF IN ANOTHER WORLD.


TARZAN HAS NEVER SEEN SUCH FRIGHTENING CREATURES.



**FLYING REPTILE**  
Kit no. 8, 18 1/2" long  
Offer Price \$2.50

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"SIMBA, MY FRIEND... WHAT! YOU'RE NOT SIMBA!"



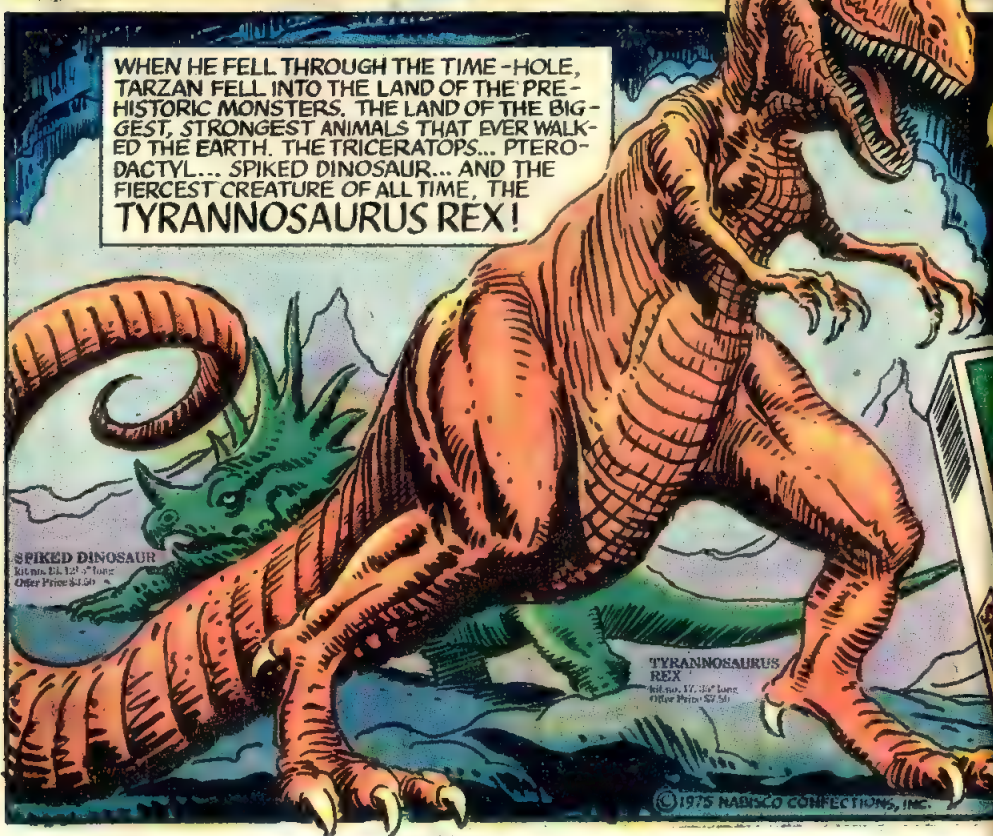
AS MANY BIG CATS AS TARZAN HAS SEEN, HE'S NEVER SEEN ONE AS HUGE AND TERRIFYING AS THIS SABER-TOOTHED TIGER.

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Kit no. 6, 9" x 4" long  
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ALLOSAURUS  
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WHEN HE FELL THROUGH THE TIME-HOLE, TARZAN FELL INTO THE LAND OF THE PREHISTORIC MONSTERS. THE LAND OF THE BIGGEST, STRONGEST ANIMALS THAT EVER WALKED THE EARTH. THE TRICERATOPS... PTERODACTYL... SPIKED DINOSAUR... AND THE FIERCEST CREATURE OF ALL TIME, THE TYRANNOSAURUS REX!



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THE BACK OF EVERY NEWLY DESIGNED POM POMS PACKAGE SHOWS A DIFFERENT PREHISTORIC MONSTER THAT CAN BE YOURS.

**TARZAN FINDS HIS WAY BACK THROUGH THE TIME-HOLE. HE'S GRATEFUL TO BE BACK IN THE WORLD OF ORDINARY MONSTERS.**

POM POMS, THE DELICIOUS MILK CARAMELS WITH THE CHOCOLATE FLAVORED COATING, HAVE A BRAND NEW PACKAGE, AND ON THE BACK OF THIS NEW PACKAGE IS A FANTASTIC OFFER. THERE ARE 17 DIFFERENT AURORA PREHISTORIC ANIMALS YOU CAN SEND FOR. THEY RANGE FROM 4 INCHES HIGH TO 35 INCHES LONG. THEY'RE MADE WITH SNAP-TOGETHER PLASTIC PARTS THAT CAN BE PAINTED.

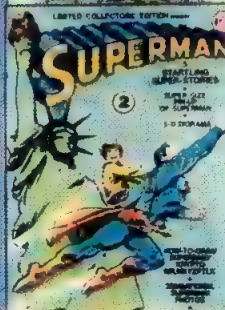
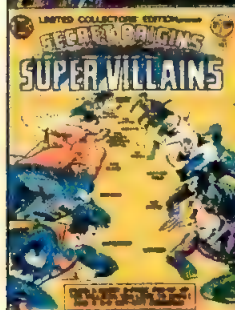
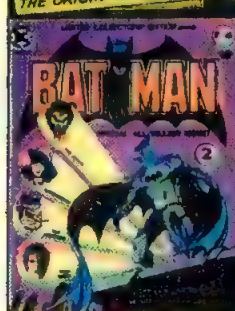
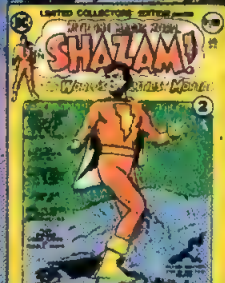
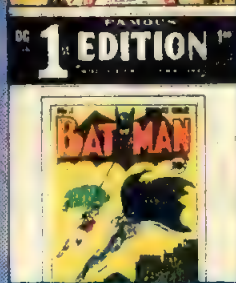
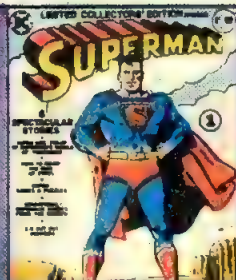
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--AN OPEN WINDOW, WHICH UNFORTUNATELY--  
IS NOT!

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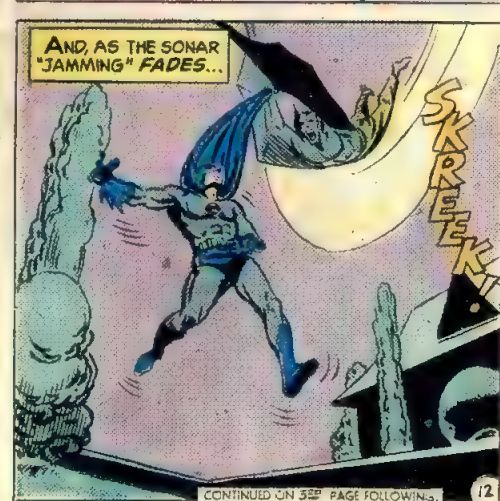
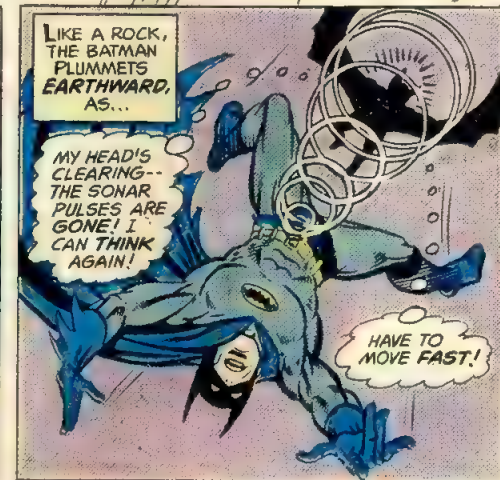
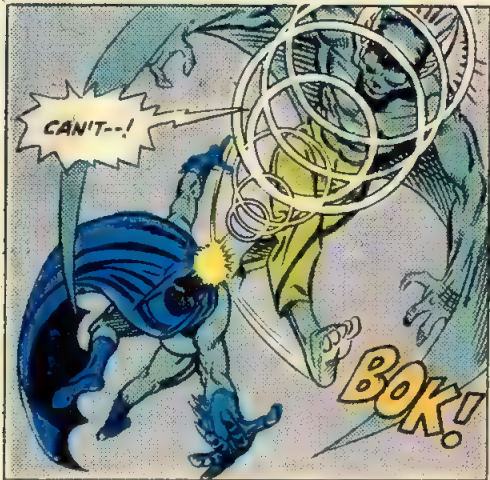
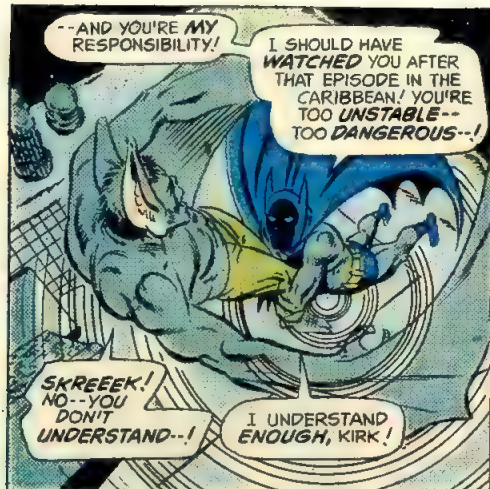
--AND THAT'S EASIER SAID THAN **DONE!**

**BATMAN!**  
YOU!

I'M SORRY I HAVE TO **HURT** YOU, LANGSTROM-- BUT I DON'T HAVE ANOTHER **CHOICE!**

YOU'RE A **MENACE--**







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SOON, AFTER A HASTY EXPLANATION HAS BEEN MADE...

I THOUGHT FRANCINE WAS GOING TO HAVE A FULL **BLOOD-TRANSFUSION**, KIRK. THAT'S WHAT WE **DECIDED** AT THE TIME.\*

YOU MEAN IT'S WHAT YOU DECIDED, DON'T YOU, BATMAN?

WHEN WE RETURNED TO GOTHAM CITY, FRANCINE WAS TOO WEAK FOR SUCH A SHOCK TO HER **SYSTEM**--

\*DETECTIVE COMICS #429 -- GERRY.

--THE SORT OF BEHAVIOR ONE USUALLY ASSOCIATES WITH EMOTIONAL STRAIN! SKREEEK!

I COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT WAS HAPPENING TO HER--

--UNTIL THE KILLINGS BEGAN. SKREEE-EKK!

YOU SHOULD HAVE CONTACTED ME IMMEDIATELY, KIRK. WE COULD HAVE--

--AND SO WE MADE A DECISION TO WAIT!

IT MAY HAVE BEEN THE WRONG DECISION, BUT IT WAS OUR OWN.

TWO WEEKS AGO, SHE BEGAN ACTING ODDLY--SPELLS OF AMNESIA, BURSTS OF HYSTERICAL ANGER--

NO! YOU STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, BATMAN. I WANTED TO HANDLE THIS PROBLEM ALONE.

I PUT HER UNDER HYPNOSIS-- PROBED HER SUBCONSCIOUS--

"--AND THAT WAS WHEN I LEARNED ABOUT THE MAN CALLED **BARON TYME**..."

--ORDERED ME... TO ATTACK THOSE PEOPLE... **BARON TYME**...

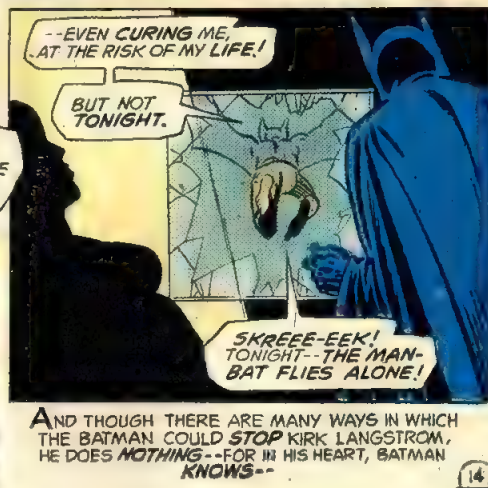
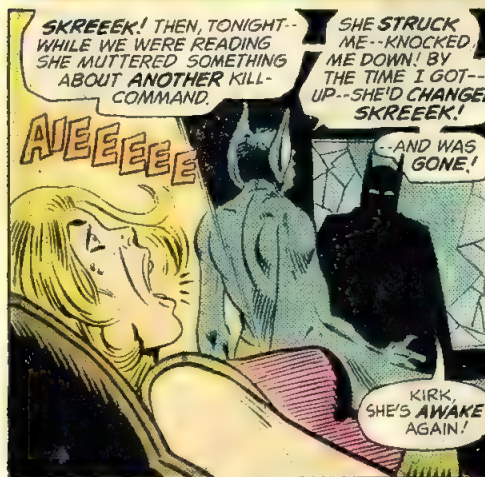
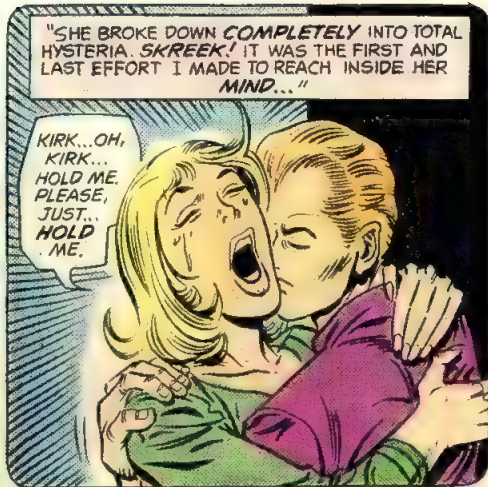
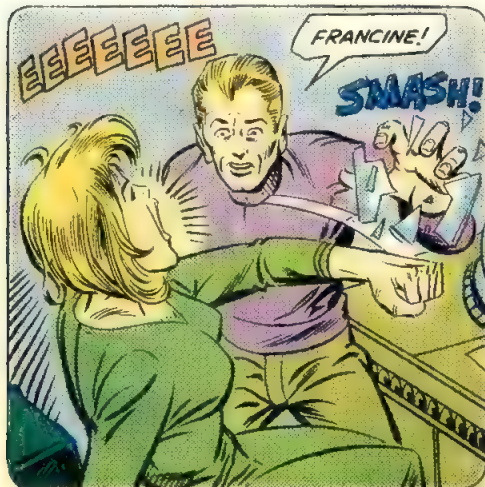
WHO IS **BARON TYME**, FRANCINE? PLEASE, DARLING-- I HAVE TO KNOW.

VOICE... COMES TO ME...

...DREAMS... A HIGH TOWER... SOMEONE TALL, CLOAKED IN BLACK...

I... DON'T WANT TO SEE HIS FACE... I DON'T WANT--





AND THOUGH THERE ARE MANY WAYS IN WHICH THE BATMAN COULD STOP KIRK LANGSTROM, HE DOES NOTHING--FOR IN HIS HEART, BATMAN KNOWS--



--THE MAN-BAT IS RIGHT.

ANTIOKE UNIVERSITY.  
THIS IS WHERE  
A MAN CALLED  
CLEMENT TYME  
LIVES AND  
WORKS.

IS IT ALSO  
THE DOMAIN  
OF BARON TYME?

THAT  
TOWER...

WHEN SHE WAS  
HYPNOTIZED, FRANCINE  
MENTIONED A DREAM  
... IN WHICH SHE SAW  
A HIGH TOWER...

IT'S A LONG-  
SHOT-- BUT AT THIS  
POINT, I'VE NOTHING  
TO LOSE.

WINGS CUTTING THE AIR IN A  
RHYTHM THAT KEEPS TIME WITH  
HIS POUNDING HEART-BEAT,  
THE MAN-BAT SWOOPS THROUGH  
THE LIT WINDOW OF THE IVY-  
COVERED TOWER--

--AND FINDS HIMSELF  
CONFRONTING A SCENE  
OF UTTER MADNESS:

WELCOME TO MY  
SANCTUM  
SANCTORUM,  
KIRK LANGSTROM.

WELCOME TO  
THE STAR  
CHAMBER OF  
BARON TYME!

SKREEEK?

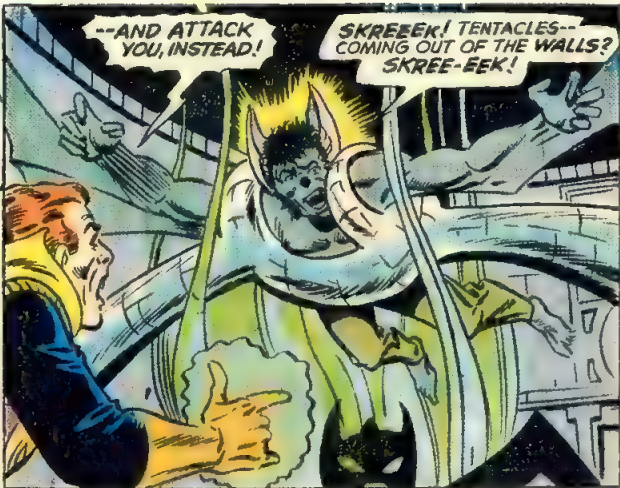




UNDER **NORMAL** CIRCUMSTANCES, I'D BE EXPECTED TO PERFORM CERTAIN **COURTESIES**--PERHAPS OFFER YOU A DRINK, CERTAINLY EXTEND MY **WELCOME**.

NO DOUBT, YOU RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT THESE ARE **NOT** NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

THUS, I MUST **FORGO** MY MANNERS--



--AND ATTACK YOU, INSTEAD!

**SKREEEK!** TENTACLES--  
COMING OUT OF THE WALLS?  
**SKREEE-EKK!**



SO, THAT SETTLES THAT, EH, LANGSTROM?

FROM THE BEGINNING, YOU AND YOUR WIFE HAVE BEEN REMARKABLY **EASY** TO MANIPULATE. I'VE USED YOU LIKE **PUPPETS**--

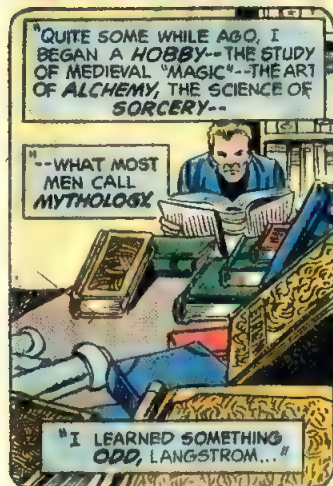
--AND NOT TILL THE VERY **END** OF MY PLAN, DID YOU EVEN COME **CLOSE** TO DISCOVERING MY **IDENTITY**.



INDEED... YOU PROBABLY DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I'VE DONE WHAT I'VE DONE.

I'LL TELL YOU WHY, LANGSTROM... FOR **POWER!** (NOT EARTHLY, MATERIAL POWER--

--THE POWER OF **SORCERY**. THE POWER OF **BLACK MAGIC!**



"QUITE SOME WHILE AGO, I BEGAN A **HOBBY**--THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL "**MAGIC**"--THE ART OF **ALCHEMY**, THE SCIENCE OF **SORCERY**--

--WHAT MOST MEN CALL **MYTHOLOGY**

"I LEARNED SOMETHING **ODD**, LANGSTROM..."



"I LEARNED THAT THERE WAS **TRUTH** WITHIN THE MYTH... THAT THERE **IS** A SCIENCE TO **SORCERY**, A SCIENCE OLDER THAN **MANKIND**.

"I EXPERIMENTED WITH CERTAIN **TEXTS**--

--AND I SUCCEEDED IN **SUMMONING** A **HELL-SPAWN!**"



**SKREEEK!** AND THEN, **TYME?** WHAT DID YOU DO NEXT?

I KNOW YOU DON'T TRULY **BELIEVE** ME, LANGSTROM--  
**DESPITE** YOUR PREDICAMENT. FRANKLY, I DON'T CARE **WHAT** YOU **BELIEVE**.

I MADE A **BARGAIN** WITH THE DEMON I CONJURED, IN RETURN FOR A GRANT OF **POWER**, I WOULD SUPPLY HIM WITH **HUMAN LIVES**--

CONTINUED ON 316 PAGE FOLLOWING



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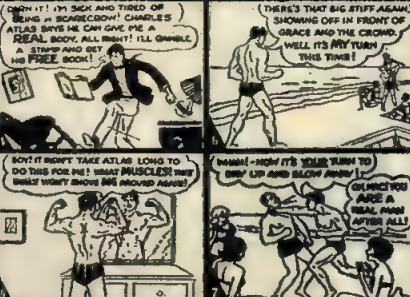
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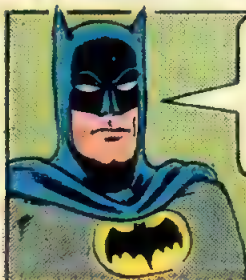
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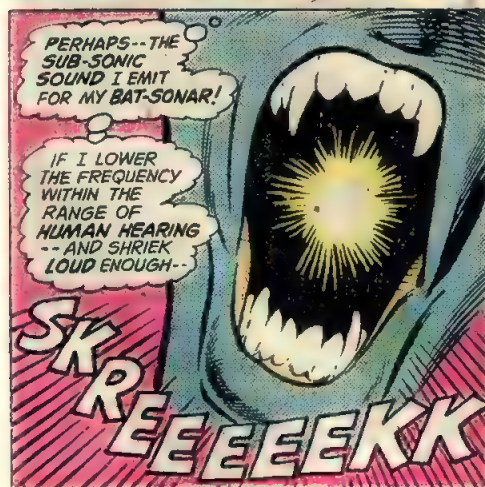
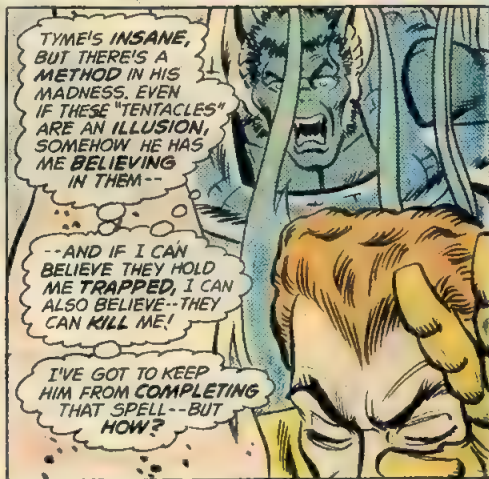
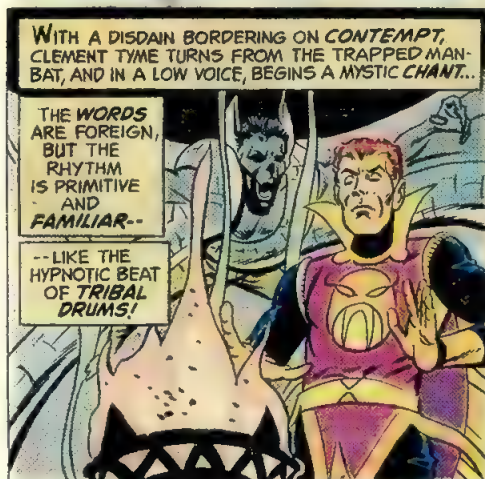
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LOUDER AND LOUDER, THE SONAR CRIES ECHO THROUGH THE TOWER CHAMBER... AND AS THEY DO, THE MAN CALLED BARON TYME SHRIEKS IN AGONY, TWISTING WILDLY TO ESCAPE THE MADDENING SOUND...

THE TENTACLES--  
DISAPPEARING!

ILLUSION OR  
REALITY, THEY'RE  
GONE--

--AND I'M FREE! I WON'T  
GIVE TYME A SECOND  
SHOT AT DESTROYING  
ME--NOT TONIGHT,  
ANYWAY!

HE CAN--  
EH?

MAY YOU  
ROT IN HELL,  
LANGSTROM!  
MAY YOU BURN  
FOREVER!

SKREEEK!  
GOOD GOD, HE'S  
ON FIRE! HE MUST  
HAVE KNOCKED OVER  
A BRAZIER!

HAVE TO  
REACH  
HIM--  
SKREEEK!  
--BEFORE--

SHABOOM!

WHEN HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS,  
SOME MOMENTS LATER, THE SMELL  
OF SMOKE IS FAINT AND FADING...

TYME MUST  
HAVE HAD  
EXPLOSIVE  
CHEMICALS  
AMONG HIS  
CONJURING  
POWDERS--  
EITHER  
THAT--

--OR THE FORCES  
HE PLAYED WITH WERE  
TOO POWERFUL TO BE  
CONTROLLED FOR LONG.

I KNOW WHICH  
THEORY I'D LIKE  
TO BELIEVE... BUT  
I WONDER...

WHICH IS  
RIGHT? AND  
WHICH--IS WRONG?

END

NEXT  
ISSUE: THE TEN-EYED MAN!

ON SALE DURING THE FIRST WEEK IN NOVEMBER





# THE MYSTERY OF THE

# MAN-BAT

C130

Since this issue's story was too action packed for us to cram in a recap of the short but shocking career of our hero, we thought we'd devote most of this page to an origin flashback for new converts to the Man-Bat madness. Fans who have read his seven previous outings should skip down to the next to the last paragraph, so that with no further ado the rest of us can—

**FLASHBACK:** Five years ago, a very special issue hit the stands in the Spring of 1970, the 400th issue of **DETECTIVE COMICS**. And to celebrate, writer Frank Robbins came up with a brand-new Bat-villain to challenge the Gotham Guardian. Kirk Langstrom was the Gotham City Museum's expert on nocturnal mammals, but he was also an ambitious man—he wanted to best the Batman!

To do this, he distilled a bat-gland serum which gave him a natural sonar power, and super-sensitive hearing to, match. But there was a secondary effect of his serum—besides gaining the powers of a bat, Langstrom began to take on the appearance of one!

Trapped in his new form, Langstrom helped Batman round up a group of gem thieves when a coincidental meeting in the museum's exhibit hall brought them all together. And he left the Masked Manhunter wondering whether this macabre Man-Bat would turn out to be his friend or his foe!

Batman wasn't the only one left hanging—the readers demanded to see more of the Man-Bat, especially since the Neal Adams and Dick Giordano art on his debut had been so dynamic... and like the initials say, your Demand is our Command!

**DETECTIVE COMICS #402** pitted Man-Bat against Batman for the first time, as Langstrom tried to steal some chemicals to help him recover his human identity. But the Darknight Detective interfered, at the cost of seemingly trapping Langstrom forever within his freakish form!

#402 also served to introduce Francine Lee, Langstrom's fiance, who returned in #407 as/his bride! Between his second and third appearances, Langstrom had brewed up a fresh batch of bat-gland formula and fed it to Francine, and now Batman had two nightmare creatures to contend with.

But third time's lucky, they say, and it proved to

be true for Mister and Mrs. Man-Bat—Batman was able to use a chemical antidote on them, and returned them to human form.

Had reader reaction not been so strong, that probably would have been the end of the Man-Bat series. But as it is, Frank Robbins was persuaded to take pen in hand for further tales of his macabre monster—and the next two stories in the saga he got only wrote but also illustrated. **DETECTIVE COMICS #416** and **429** featured action-oriented tales which add little to the Man-Bat lore, but did continue to expand the cult which had sprung up around him.

Hmmm... there was one new development in #429—Francine was bitten by a vampire bat, and became a vampire she-bat. That brings you up to date on her career prior to this issue.

But her husband was not so easily sidelined. He returned in **BATMAN #254**, having gained the ability to change from man to monster at will (via chemical capsules) along the way. And now that his powers were under control, Langstrom was ready to tackle his life-long ambition of becoming a crimefighter. And so Man-Bat came to be what he is today.

One final historical note, if we may, Man-Bat's last appearance was in **BRAVE AND BOLD #119**, earlier this year, and it was in that story that he earned the reward money which left him independently wealthy... **APPARENTLY.**

And that, friends, brings us to the here and now, and **MAN-BAT #1**, which you've just read. We'd like to hear your comments on our premiere performance, and if you address a letter to **MAN-MAIL MADNESS**, National Periodical Publications, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10019, you might just see it in print three issues from now.

Meanwhile, you'll be seeing more of our hero, as scripted by a gentleman who wrote in to a similar letter column five years ago in praise of "The Challenge of The Man-Bat"—Martin Pasko. Marty's letter commented that Man-Bat was the first reoccurring villain of the new Batman era, and editor Julie Schwartz replied with a plug for the second such villain—The Ten-Eyed Man—who will be featured in Marty's first Man-Bat epic—on sale the second week in November!



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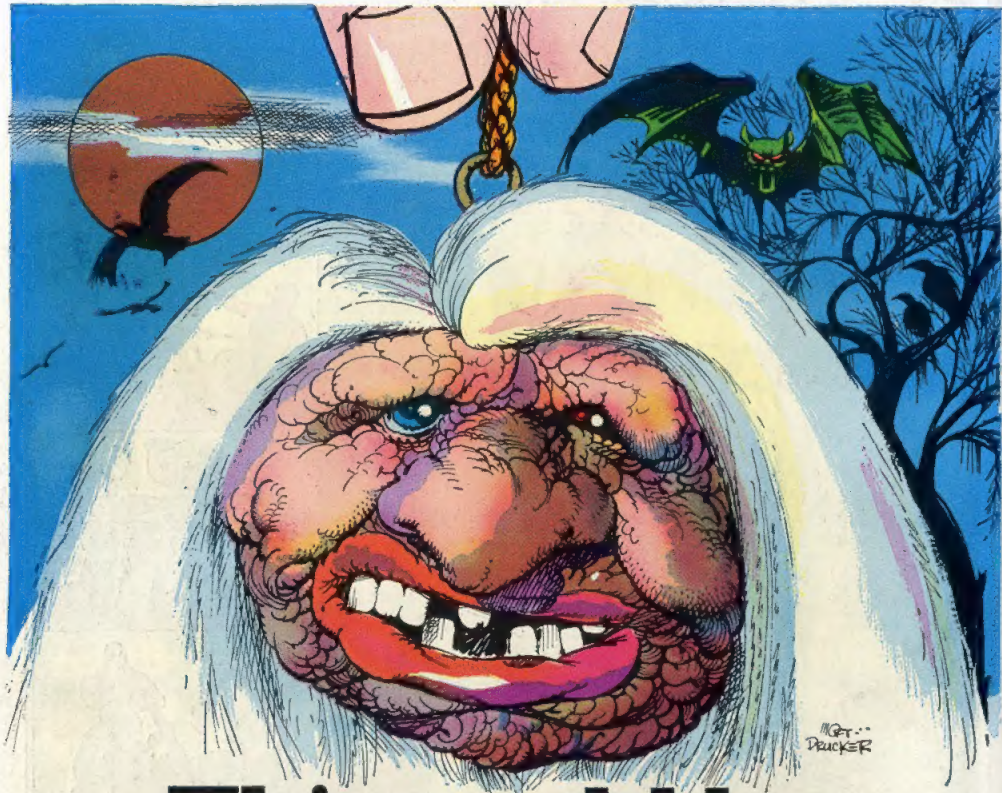
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